

SAMHSA Announces a Working Definition of "Recovery"

SAMHSA recently announced a new working definition of recovery from mental disorders and substance use disorders. The definition is the product of a year-long effort by SAMHSA and a wide range of partners in the behavioral health care community and other fields to develop a working definition of recovery that captures the essential, common experiences of those recovering from mental disorders and substance use disorders. Major guiding principles support the recovery definition. SAMHSA led this effort as part of its [Recovery Support Strategic Initiative](#).

The new working definition of Recovery From Mental Disorders and Substance Use Disorders is as follows:

A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

Through the Recovery Support Strategic Initiative, SAMHSA also has delineated four major dimensions that support a life in recovery:

- **Health:** Overcoming or managing one's disease(s) as well as living in a physically and emotionally healthy way.
- **Home:** A stable and safe place to live.
- **Purpose:** Meaningful daily activities, such as a job, school, volunteerism, family caretaking, or creative endeavors, and the independence, income, and resources to participate in society.
- **Community:** Relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope.